

N. The additional stages provide additional paths between network input ports and network output ports, thereby enhancing fault tolerance and lessening contention.

REMARKS

The above-identified application has been amended as indicated. These amendments correct amendments made to the specification in the Preliminary Amendment, which were in error (the amendments identified the wrong page -- page 85, lines 16 and 18 rather than page 105). Applicants' attorney requests that the amendments made to the specification at page 85, lines 16 and 18, which were made in the Preliminary Amendment, not be entered.

Because these corrections are minor and formal, do not involve new matter, and do not in any way affect the nature or scope of the invention, it is believed that they may be entered under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.312 without withdrawing the application from issue.

The Issue Fee has not yet been paid.

Record is made of a telephonic interview between Examiner Luu and the below-signed Applicants' attorney that occurred on April 21, 2005 and April 26, 2005 and was directed to the above-identified amendments to the specification.

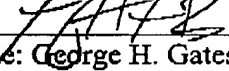
Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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